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THE

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1816

ECCENTRIC.

BY

GEORGE WEGUELIN, GENT.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

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TO THE
ECCENTRIC SOCIETY.



GENTLEMEN,

HAVING been honored by you with the distinguished dignity of Laureat, I take the liberty of dedicating these Poems to you ; as those humble effusions were produced at the request and earnest desire of the Members of the Society, for their particular pleasure and sole amusement, Composed to elevate Eccentricity, and not prepared for public criticism,—I did not anticipate, at the time I had the honor of reciting them before you, that any Member would so far have abused the confidence honorably and implicitly placed in the Society, as a body, surreptitiously to aim at depriving me of those laurels, your universal suffrage and approbation have decreed me ; for contributing so largely and diligently to your hilarity, amusement, and eccentricity.

That this unfair dealing has been exercised towards me, your elected Laureat, no doubt exists ; and the injustice has been effected by clandestinely taking notes at the epochs of the Poems being read, and by their

being published by a Member, as his own composition, for his selfish and sordid benefit; thereby defrauding me, their true Author, of my just right and meed, and committing them to the public, (at whose ordeal of opinion they were never purposed to appear,) crude and uncorrected, as they were produced, in hours of confiding cheerfulness and undisguised eccentricity.

That they breathe nothing but what is loyal, and that no immoral feeling stains their lustre,—I, as their Author, feel justly proud; well knowing the difficulty there is, when the mind unbends from serious pursuits and gives the reins to convivialty, to keep right steerage, and avoid falling from mirth to folly.

I therefore, in justification of myself, and honest protection of my own property, (such an outrage and spoliation having been committed by the daring plagiarism,) and not from any personal vanity or pecuniary advantage, but solely in vindication of my own honor and just right, now present those Poems to my brother Eccentrics, as a tribute of my high esteem for them,—as a proof of my diligence in the labors of eccentricity, for the promotion of innocent cheerfulness,—and as a last farewell in my character of Laureat.

I am, Gentlemen,

With great respect,

Your most obedient Servant,

GEO. WEGUELIN.

Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square.

ORDER OF THE POEMS, AND
WHEN READ.

SONG, DUKE OF YORK read *6th Sept.* 1825.
OLYMPUS „ *25th Aug.* 1826.
FUNERAL ORATION..... „ *17th Feb.* 1827.
ECCENTRIC DRAMA..... „ *31st Dec.* 1827.

THE LAUREAT'S FAREWELL.



A Song,

DEDICATED TO

H. R. H. THE DUKE OF YORK,

FOR HIS EVER-MEMORABLE SPEECH IN THE
HOUSE OF LORDS.

GOD bless noble York ! I sing,
Whose vow protects his King,
From enemies profound ;
Who aim to cut down the tree
Of Church, State, and Liberty,
That rais'd our prosperity
To glorious renown.

What ! shall our gracious King,
Submit to such a thing
As Popish sway ?
Their hatred's unalterable
To Protestants—unpardonable,
By Pope, Priest, or Cardinal ;—
God be our stay !

May York's heroic arm
Shield us from every harm,
 That threatens our laws :
Britons, join heart and hand,
To overthrow this papal band,
That would enslave our land ;—
 God defend our cause !

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On York be pleas'd to pour ;
 God strengthen him !
Crown him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to uphold us ;—
 God save the King !

OLYMPUS IN AN UPROAR!

A POETICAL EXTRAVAGANZA.

THE ARGUMENT.

AN Author being at his studies, his flights of imagination ascend to Mount Olympus, before the assembly or court of the Gods; who are struck with astonishment at the boldness of the intruder's fancy,—denounce his performances as pedantic, inflammatory, and treasonable; and provokes Jupiter to commence an attack to annihilate all poets and their works, and to desolate the world; but is interrupted in his design by the arrival of Mercury, with tidings of the Author that has caused the uproar, and with additional accusations against him. Minerva interposes in his behalf, defends and vindicates his cause, and challenges the whole synod that can prove to the contrary. The Goddesses get together by the ears;—vast personal abuse;—the sacred mount in danger, which would inevitably been fatal to all, had not Jupiter put a stop to the controversy, by interposing his authority to that effect; sums up the evidence on both sides with great ability and impartiality, and gives judgment in favour of the Author, whom he justifies and immortalizes; commands Apollo to record the same, and harmony and good fellowship is restored. Momus now steps forward, and obtains permission to have a copy from Apollo, which he gives to the world, and in his droll jesting manner tells her he don't care whether she likes it or not, as he is quite regardless of its fate, and thus the Poem ends.

AN humble bard, unknown to public fame,
Who never wrote for honor, wealth or name,

But only for a whim, himself to please,
 When, free from care, he gently took his ease.
 The Muses then engaged his leisure time,
 To jingle nonsense in his head to rhyme ;
 And as Pegasus winged, his fancy soar'd
 To Mount Olympus—before the celestial board.
 The Gods, amaz'd, were struck with great surprise,
 And scarcely could believe their ears and eyes.
 “ Whence comes,” said they, “ this incongruity ?
 There's not a line of it—in unity ;
 This jargon certainly will affright the devil !
 Such tropes, bad grammar,—all is a mere riddle.
 Vain vapid trash, romantic rodomontado,
 The bewilder'd brain of some maniac bravado.
 To puzzle our council, seems the silly attempt,
 The sum and substance of the argument :”
 For, really, it consisted of neither rhyme nor reason ;
 To say the truth, it savour'd more of treason,
 And who the author was, no one could tell,
 Whether he resided in heaven, earth, or hell ;
 So up they rose simultaneously on the occasion,
 To know who dar'd to make this innovation ?
 Like mighty billows, whose surges lash the sky,
 Is heedless of the bark it throws so high ;
 So work'd they on their powerful potentate,
 To rouse his ire into deadly hate.

This made great Jupiter send forth his thunder,
 To strike the world below with awe and wonder,
 And all her lofty palaces lay waste;—
 Had not swift Mercury, with nimble haste,
 Put a stop to the high dire decree,
 Gone forth to destroy all poets and poetry !
 So coming in with speed, quite out of breath,
 Approach'd the royal presence—pale as death :
 And, bowing reverentially profound,—
 “ Please your majesty,” said he, “ I’ve found
 This extraordinary pedantic prodigy,
 That has made so free with our genealogy.
 Would you believe it comes from the wretched pen
 Of one poor scribbler, nam’d GEORGE WEGUELIN ?
 ’Tis he that has been so prodigal with our lives,
 And of us wrote so many notorious lies ;
 Branding us up and down for paltry rascals,
 As tho’ we were fit for nothing but his vassals.”
 “ Stop, stop !” cried Minerva, “ brother Mercury, you
 mistake;
 He certainly has been a consummate rake
 Amongst the Goddesses, that is known full well ;
 There’s Venus, the Graces, Muses, all can tell
 How much he lov’d them ; and would risk his life
 To shield our reputation from shame and strife.
 But, as for what you’ve said, I don’t believe
 One word of slander from his lips could breathe ;

All can be said, he's a jocular pleasant man,—
 Now that's the truth;—deny it, I dare who can !"—
 At that the ladies' tongues began to clatter
 So much, no one could tell what was the matter.
 With might and main they each other roast,
 Who had been cuckold or had cuckold most ;
 And really were proceeding to hurl a blow
 That threaten'd the sacred mount with overthrow.
 But Jupiter, who past, present, future, all can see,—
 Soon made a virtue of necessity ;
 And, therefore, to put a stop to this contention,
 Issued forth his fiat for its peremption.
 In voice tremendous, that the Empyrean shook,
 As thus he address'd the Gods, with solemn look :—
 " I see" said he " what all this row's about,
 'Tis envy, malice,—the secret now is out ;
 And tho' 'tis said he's an author of little note,
 He never receiv'd a farthing for what he wrote.
 Not like your sapless wits of the present day;
 Who can neither write nor speak, yet look for pay ;
 His pen ne'er panegyricized ambition's shrine,
 Or advocated the voluptuous libertine ;
 Or put to blush the lovely virgin's cheek,
 By ribaldry unfit the eye to meet ;
 Or e'er polluted the fair historic page,
 By vilifying the illustrious or the sage.

His soul, indignant, spurn'd such venom'd rhyme,
 Whose venal authors live by lust and crime ;
 But was always open, generous, and free,
 To every rank of life in society.

What, if he did scribble walls for want of paper,
 He's not the worse for that ;—he is no traitor !
 It's that many a celebrated poet have done before,
 Wrote a new year's or natal ode on a cellar door ;
 And some of the wisest have been at a loss to know
 Whether it should be pro or con, or con or pro.

In my estimation, poor gentleman,
 He did what all should do—the best they can :
 And thus, to fill up time, it is no wonder
 That he sometimes did make a little blunder.
 So the wags may joke and sneer, but, by my state,
 I proclaim him chief of poets immaculate ;
 And for his devoted zeal to our renown,
 His prolific brows with sacred laurel crown.
 With bowls of nectar, to dispel dull care,
 To celebrate the Gods and toast the fair.”——

His aspect by this time had grown serene,
 And not a trait remain'd of former spleen ;
 For now, like Sol, he shew'd a glorious face,
 As he proceeded on with animated grace.
 “ Come hither, my dear Apollo,” he call'd aloud,
 “ On golden tablet in yon azure cloud,

Inscribe these lays—this energetic verse—
 That we in grand assembly may rehearse,
 At ambrosial festivals and merriment.”
 The Deities unanimously bow’d assent,
 And with melodious notes they sung divine
 Praises to Jove and the tuneful Nine.
 The Royal Court were now rising to retire,
 But Apollo returning, with his silver lyre,
 Presented the tablet with a gracious smile,
 And play’d it off in most exquisite style.
 The Gods were all delighted ; and Momus, as a favor,
 Requested a transcript of Apollo’s labor :
 Which, having obtain’d permission, whate’er may be its
 lot,
 Whether it possesses any title to merit or not,
 To the world, merry Momus gives, regardless of hope or
 fear ;
 But should there be a fault—critic, drop a tear,—
 To blot it out ; and in oblivion’s bed
 Put it to rest amongst your poetic dead.

A FUNERAL ORATION,

ON THE MUCH-LAMENTED DEATH OF

H. R. H. THE DUKE OF YORK.

HOW shall the Muse begin—where make an end—a theme so ponderous for her feeble pen? Inspire her, Heaven, with thy celestial aid, to draw a portrait of departed worth, adequate to his illustrious rank and merit; for human power cannot perform the task.

Oh, Britons! Britons! the Royal Funeral's past—the solemn dirge is o'er. See how Britannia weeps!—Weeps for her dear son, her chief in arms, who now lies folded in the embrace of Death.—Well might he be called her chief in arms, and most beloved son.—He was the champion of his King, his country, and his God.

Dauntless he stood (nor stood in vain), the Hero of our sacred liberties; and boldly threw his gauntlet at the foe, who stood aghast to see his martial spirit and devoted zeal. That vow he then pronounced, flew swift to Heaven's high altar, and was received with shouts of joy by all its Holy Host.—No tear was shed, or requisite, to blot it out, for it was engraven on the hearts of all the Saints that love their God; nor all the powers of hell can e'er erase it thence.—The Pope may grin, and Cardinals gnash their teeth, but 'twill have no effect;—their excommunications, alike their absolutions, are vile cheats. Neither requires he their requiems for his soul, to release it from the bonds of Purgatory; knowing full well they could not save their own. But Purgatory and excommunication—What a weak device!—A bugbear! fit only to alarm a child. Well may these holy fathers strain their utmost nerve to keep their slaves in ignorance; but soon the time will come they'll ope' their eyes, and then farewell to all infernal thraldom.—No! no! his soul ascended to the blessed realms of light, without their help. Fast by the side of God, it is preserved, clothed in glorious immortality, enjoying endless beatitude and love—a just reward—and in his holy council pleads our cause, and shields us from the iron yoke of Popery.

And though his mortal frame moulders in the temple of great St. George, who guards the Castle of our gracious King,—from whose majestic towers his princely arm holds the balance of the mighty world,—Still, still, he lives!—lives in the breasts of all true Englishmen.—But, chief, ye brave defenders of your country!—He was the Soldier's friend!—Nay, he was more—he was their Father also! Bear witness all ye hardy veterans, brothers in arms, when on the plains of Gallia he led you on to victory, how oft he has administered to your necessities.—Like the immortal Nelson, of renown, he did his duty; making the bed of sorrow a couch of down, and easing the pang of death, by cheering the broken heart with this most soothing reflection,—their orphans then became his children.—He fathered all that came to him legitimately, and raised a race of youthful warriors to bless his memory and defend their country.—They came, a thousand strong, from the College of infant Mars, raised by his munificence, to shed the last sad parting tear o'er their Royal patron's corse.—Those tears were tears of feeling—from the heart—that rolled in artless torrents down their innocent cheeks.—“Alas! alas!” they cried, “our father—our best friend—would to God we had died for thee!—Never! never will we disgrace thy precious name, or flinch, in time of need, our beloved country's cause.”

Now let us draw the veil of dark futurity aside, and view the last picture of mortality,—the dissolution of the universe,—that most tremendous day!—When the Archangel, descending with loud trump, shall rend the spheres, and proclaim to man—*TIME'S NO MORE!*—At that dread moment, before the awful throne of *GOD*, all nations will be summoned, for final judgment.—Then will *FREDERICK*, the blessed, the great, be raised up to receive a glorious reward. In bloom of youth he'll then appear, renovated and refreshed.—Like to a Giant, invigorated with new wine, to meet, triumphantly, his pallid adversaries.—But Horror, even Horror, shrinks at the bare recital of what will be their fate!—They too will rise, but in deformity terrific! With hideous shapes, that freeze the young blood and make the hair to stand on end like quills of the fretful porcupine. Then will *Cowls*, *Rosarys*, and *Relics*, and all the trash of *Popish* craft and sanctity, be thrown to *Bats* and *Moles*;—the holy fathers will not own them then.—But all will not avail; mountains and rocks will not screen their accursed heads against the vengeance of offended Heaven; but forth will they be driven to those perpetual infernal shades prepared before the worlds were formed, when chaos reigned—for *Satan* and his impious crew.

Then, Britons ! magnanimous Britons ! rejoice, rejoice, and be exceeding glad !——FREDERICK, our beloved Prince, not only sleeps in peace on earth, but his benign spirit presides o'er our destinies in Heaven ; and, with paternal care, guards our happy isle from Popish chains and slavery ;—diffusing throughout the land, by his most noble and heroic example, a lasting monument of glory to HIS BLESSED MEMORY—

AD INFINITUM.



EXORDIUM,

ADDRESSED TO THE ECCENTRIC SOCIETY.

GENTLEMEN,

THE very high and distinguished honor which you have been pleased to confer on me, of Poet Laureat,—when I behold before me an assembly possessing such superior and transcendent abilities in the literary world to any thing my humble pen can produce,—impresses me with diffidence and awe; feeling, as I do, my own incapacity to do justice to your expectations. I therefore most earnestly crave your usual kind indulgence and liberality, on this, as on former occasions.

Gentlemen, having been requested to compose a Poem on our return to our original Saloon, from whence all Eccentricity springs, I have shaped the subject into a Drama; the characters of which are selected from some of our most brilliant Eccentrics of the present day, whom I hope will in no wise feel offended at any little liberty taken with their singularities, but attribute it to the whim of the moment; as Poets, you know, are allowed an eccentric latitude, to promote pleasantry and mirth.

A SATIRICAL DRAMA,

ENTITLED

The Eccentric;

OR,

NOTHING LIKE HOME.

Dramatis Personnæ.

PRESIDENT,
CHARGER GENERAL,
SERGEANT BAYLY,
PANNEL,
SOMNUS,
SIR JOHN LONGBOW,
JONATHAN MARVELLOUS,
SOLOMON MACE, *Crown Officer*,
BISHOP BONNER,
ARCHDEACON CHANGEABLE,
DOCTOR BOLUS,
MULTUM IN PARVO,
HERCULES CHAMPION,
COMMODORE SWIFTSURE,
LAZARUS HAMMOND.

SCENE—*The Eccentric Hall.*

PROLOGUE, spoken by the Author.

EPILOGUE, ————— Charger General.

PROLOGUE.

BOAST not of Rome, nor all her pomp of state,
Tho' once so mighty, and imperious great ;
She, who proclaim'd herself to all the world
Mistress thereof, and thence her vengeance hurl'd
On all, but abject slaves who bent the knee
And bow'd their necks with great humility.
But Britons, noble Britons, led the way,
To stop ambitious Rome's gigantic sway,
And restore the glorious face of day,—
That long had lain beneath the shades of night :
But as bright Sol arose, dispers'd in flight,
Like the arch Fiend who flew from Uriel's face,
Whose sable pinions only could be trac'd ;
And never more, I pray, will re-appear,
To blast old England with a curse so dear.
O happy hour ! so grateful to mankind,
To enjoy again sweet freedom of the mind.

Blest Reformation ! long may thy wings o'erspread,
 And shield our envy'd land from Popish dread.
 But what of Rome, and all her mighty deeds,
 Her lofty turrets or her flow'ry meads ;
 Her Carnivals, or Amphitheatres,
 Her gaudy shows, or wretched Gladiators ;
 Where exhibitions, to amuse the great,
 Are made important matters of the state ?——
 I sing a nobler theme, of vast renown,—
 Eccentric wanderings and return to town ;
 Fam'd London Town—that grand emporium
 Of Merchandise, all the world bring in
 To that great Mart, compact in all its parts,
 The seat of wisdom, sciences, and arts ;
 There noble Georgius reigns with splendid sway,
 The mightiest Monarch of the present day ;
 He holds, with justice, the golden scales of power,
 Diffusing life and joy each circling hour,
 To all his subjects, of whate'er degree,
 Whom he upholds by his magnanimity.
 No Widow or poor Orphan ever cry,
 But what his gracious ear is ever nigh
 To hear their plaints—relieve their wants and cares—
 And with his princely aid dry up their tears.
 Thrice happy nation ! blest with such a King ;
 May God preserve him, let the nation sing.——

Now as we are met, by usage, here to night,
 After a preposterous perilous flight,
 In which I believe few histories of late
 A story half so wonderful relate.
 As birds of passage from bush to brier roam,
 Can find no resting place till they get home ;
 So we, per favour of our glorious King,
 Shelter once more under his sovereign wing,
 To hold our senate in our ancient hall,
 Where Eccentricity extends to all.
 Free brothers of the sacred order rais'd
 Of noble virtues, which can ne'er be raz'd ;
 That love the synod of so great a name,
 And glory only in Eccentric fame,
 Not like the empty fop of high degree,
 Who vaunts his dress or frothy pedigree :
 No, no ; Eccentric essence is a blazing star,
 Whose powerful rays enlighten nations far
 With brilliant ideas, that illumine the mind,
 And raise the thoughts above the vulgar kind ;
 Makes genius boundless—aloft in air it flies—
 Expands in space unlimited in the skies ;
 From world to world it roams about at pleasure,
 And then returns with eccentric treasure
 Of wit, of whim, bon-mot, and jeu d'esprit,
 The very soul of Eccentricity,

To the grand Council of the brotherhood,
 Where no two faces lie beneath a hood.
 Like the gay Bee, who roams about for sweets,
 Returns to the hive with delicious meats.
 There all is open, generous, and free,
 Of converse, argument, and liberty,
 To every Member of the Coterie.
 They weigh the laws judiciously and true,
 Cut out the obsolete or make the code anew ;
 With equity and justice fill the chair
 Of regal power, whene'er elected there ;
 And tries impartially the cause profound,
 Sums up with wisdom and the laws expound ;
 Submits with modesty the case before him,
 For the decision of the learned Forum.

}

SCENE—*The Eccentric Hall.*

Char. Gen. NOW, gentlemen, all this is vastly fine,
To waste so much of our precious time
With rhapsodies and rhymes, so out of metre,
I could have made much better, by St. Peter !
Call him a Poet ? I would not give a curse
For such vile humdrum stuff, as my name's P——se :
He's only a Grub Street bard, I know well,
Whose trash is bawl'd around fam'd Clerkenwell :
But I shall bring a charge before I've done,—
That will, I'm sure, produce some charming fun,—
Against this base polluter of the Muses,
Whose spotless fame he so much abuses ;
And as I'm Charger General in this court,
I'll call a chair instantaner, and begin the sport,
So, gentlemen, attend I pray.
I propose learn'd *Burke* to that high station,—
A wiser man there is not in the nation,—

Declare, I beg, without delay,

Whether my request your sufferance meet.

Eccs. All, all, all. Mr. President, take your seat.

Pres. Pray, sir, for what purpose have you call'd me
here?

Char. Gen. To prefer a charge of murder!

Eccs. ————— (Hear, hear, hear!)

Char. Gen. And which has caus'd our wanderings
up and down,

From Dan unto Beersheba, through the town,

And from my pocket drew out many a crown.

Pres. Bless me! this is a serious charge indeed!

Gentlemen, is it your pleasure we try the cause?

(Tremendous uproar follow'd the solemn pause,

And all cried out—Proceed, proceed!)

Pres. Now, sir, go on; but strictly adhere to truth,

For swearing will not do without some proof:

Presumptive evidence is but a plea,—

When life's at stake, facts only will do for me.

So now to your charge:—Who is the culprit, say?

Char. Gen. I charge this waggish Poet of the day.

Pres. Ha! I know him well—What has he done?

Char. Gen. Drown'd poor Hammond in a cask of rum.

Pres. Indeed! indeed! Don't you think 'twas wine,
And made a Clarence of him—out of time?

Char. Gen. It may be so; it's one and the same degree;
It shew'd he didn't possess humanity;—

Besides all this, he took our laws away,
And ever since we all have gone astray.

Pres. Pray have you witnesses to prove your case?

Char. Gen. I have, sir; most respectable,
And very intelligible.—

Somnus! Somnus! stand up and shew your face.

Pres. That he knows nought about it, is very true,
The man has been asleep an hour or two,
And to rouse him now will never do. }

Char. Gen. Well, well, sir; I have more than one
string to my bow.—

Sir John, come forward, and tell us what you know
Of this dark mystery,
And all the history.

(Here a loud laugh took place, and merry jeer,
Because they thought he look'd a little queer;
For it was whisper'd round—he had, by law,
Been deem'd, or made, what Eccentrics call an outlaw.)

Serg. Bayly. Sir, I object to him; he's not a proper
man.

Char. Gen. What, sir, what!—Prove it, if you can?

Serg. B. I both will and can!—This is a foul confede-
racy

Against my worthy friend;—a complete conspiracy
To overthrow his fair reputation,
That has gain'd the Ex's admiration.

Pres. Well, sir, hear him out, and then reply :
To interrupt him is not gentlemanly.

Char. Gen. May I proceed, sir, to prove my case—
Without further interruption taking place?

Pres. Sir, you are under my protection here ;
I'll punish the next that dares to interfere :
So, sir, proceed with your examination.

Char. Gen. The books, you know, of all the laws were
stole,
And carried to the Shakespear in a shoal.

Pres. That certainly requires an explanation.

Sir John. It's very true, I swear by my salvation.
From thence were smuggled coastways to the Strand, }
To Vulcan's Cave, by a desperate band }
Of renegados—from their native land, }
Who threw them plump into a maiden's lap, }
Where they took a comfortable nap, }
And now, I believe, are mash'd up into pap. }

Char. Gen. Good, very good ; thus far we've got on
gaily,
And silenc'd the *red rag* of Sergeant Bayly.

Pres. Well, sir ?—Proceed — of Hammond — re- }
specting him— }

Sir John. He was immers'd, sir, in a cag of gin— }
Upon my Eccentric honor !—by one Weguelin. }
And man and laws, I believe are now as dead

As tho' they never had been animated :
 And what is more, I swear by beauty's bow'r,
 They've not been seen or heard of to this hour.

Pres. That's very strange; the man cou'dn't melt
 away,

As spirit keeps a subject from decay;
 As to the laws, we are guided by their presence—

Char. Gen. But that's their eccentric spirit, — not
 their essence.

Pres. Well, sir, have you any more evidence to
 advance?

Char. Gen. I had, sir, but my witness is in a trance.
 But I have proved, beyond a doubt, my case,
 And trust, Sir John may now take his place.
 As conviction must ensue, and execution follow,
 And then I shall rid off this sad fellow.

Pres. Gentlemen, is it your pleasure to ask this wit-
 ness

Any thing relative to the facts of fitness?

Serg. B. Yes, sir; I have, as Counsel for the De-
 fendan't;

Touching this charge that now is pendent;
 So stop, Sir John, I have a question or two,
 Before you go, to put to you.

You are as capital a witness as e'er I knew.

Now, sir, remember, be nothing loath;—

Upon your Eccentric oath—

}

Was it wine, or rum, or gin,
He suffocated this poor creature in ?

Sir John. Mr. President, that question's out of joint
—its a—botheration.

Serg. B. Come, come, sir, to the point ;—
No prevarication !—

Pres. You certainly can demand an explanation.

Sir John. Dear sir ! you've put me in a flusteration.

Serg. B. Come, come, sir ; no shuffling,—my question answer true :

I think you're neither Christian, Turk, nor Jew !
Or you wou'd have been explicit long ago.

Sir John. Well then, upon my honor, I've told you
all I know ;

But P——se can tell you more of it, I trow.

Serg. B. I thought so all the time,—but now the
murder's out,

The Charger General has made so great a rout ;

You see he has made a cat's paw of this lout.

Come, sir, confess every thing before you go ;

Be brief, I beg, and let's have all you know ;

Hide nothing from the Court—perhaps you'll be forgiven

And be received by us as well as Heaven.

Sir John. I really have told you all, I swear by Mahomet's beard,

That bears upon the question you have heard,
 Except what roguish tricks I did myself,—
 To encrease my fame—as misers do their pelf :
 But now I bid adieu to all my wicked bent,
 And turn from prodigal to a true penitent.

Serg. B. That's quite sufficient : I have prov'd a flaw }
 In the indictment, brought by this Jack Daw, }
 That on an innocent man he may lay his claw.
 On this I rest my client's defence at large,
 As no evidence has prov'd so foul a charge.
 As to the story about the laws and books,—
 Lays with themselves,—you can read it in their looks :
 For I have received such authentic information, }
 Brought by the Swiftsure, to our good old nation, }
 That the man's alive and well, beyond disputation ! }

Pres. Now, sir, I call on you for your defence,
 And trust you'll with ease dispel a cloud so dense,
 That hangs suspended o'er your devoted head,
 Before its thunders burst and strike you dead.
 So now I commend you to the care of Him
 Who rules the thoughts and actions of all men.

Pan. Mr. President, and Gentlemen,
 Have patience and I'll do the best I can ;
 And leave the result to you—
 As a Jury just and true—
 Who will decide I'm sure impartially,
 As from your office you receive no fee.

Gentlemen, I'm innocent! and treat this charge with
scorn.

Innocent, did I say? Yes, as the child unborn.
I know the secret workings of the plot,
And workmen too,—the head of whom's a Scot—
Who styles himself a Poet; (poor driveller)—
I would not stake my wit with such a scribbler.
The scraps that bear his name are done by proxy,
Not by the Muses, but a hackney'd Doxy,
Which he sometimes exhibits to the town,
Lest his high fame should suffer in renown.
As for Pegasus he never mounts at all,
Lest he should give him such a kick or fall—
Would dash his sapless brains against a wall,
And thus knock out the remaining few that's left,
To the world's laughter, at his sad bereft:
For, gentlemen, 'tis evident to see
He wants his place again, and turn out me;
And that's the reason why he has raised this story,
To tarnish my laurel crown—my greatest glory—
But your good sense will teach this would-be rhymers
Never to set up more for a refiner
Of men and manners, in a christian land,
As long as this enlightened world shall stand,
And thus I leave my cause within your hands;
Trusting that your decision will this night prove
How much you honor virtue, and true justice love.

Pres. Gentlemen, there do appear to me
 Not mere assertions only, but malignity,
 That has been brought against this worthy man,
 To remove him from our friendship, if they can.
 The defence, I think, is manly, plain and clear;
 And very happy shall I be to hear
 Any gentleman, that candidly will state
 His unbiass'd sentiments on the prisoner's fate;
 Trusting at the same time he'll keep in view
 The Eccentric honor that to himself is due.

Char. Gen. Mr. President, my witness begins to wake.

Pres. Sir, his evidence is come too late.

Somnus. Where am I? Ye powers of darkness tell,
 And do not torment me longer with your spell !

Pres. It's no consequence—sleep on and take your rest;
 We'll not put your torpid conscience to the test.

Bish. Bon. Sir, the Panel's a public pest, and deserves
 no pity,

In issuing to the world his impious ditty :

I could have forgiven him, if he hadn't wrote

A firebrand against our immaculate Pope,

And which most certainly was no joke.

The whole blasphemy is known to the holy See,

And if he's not burnt now, he will at the *Auto da Fe*.

Arch. Changeable. Brother Bonner, I think you are
 rather hard

Against this poor persecuted bard :

Let's have Christian feeling in us pray,
 And let him live to see a better day,
 Which possibly may dawn on him ere long,
 For really, to speak my mind, we both are wrong.

Bish. Bon. Oh, oh ! I see how it is,—you're turn'd

Heretic,

And favor this Reformer in his trick,
 Thou vile abominable hypocrite !

But you shall soon excommunicated be ;
 I'll purge the world of infidels, and set her free.

Dr. Bolus. If I were sure he'd play'd so foul a part,
 I'd physic him to death with all my heart :
 A bouncing dose of calomel or jalap
 Would soon work up his bowels to a gallop ;
 But as I cannot bring my mind to that,
 I must be merciful to him—that's flat.

Enter JONATHAN MARVELLOUS.

Jon. Mar. Have you heard the news?—it's now the
 town all o'er—

As I came through the Strand, there was such a roar :
 You know the Crown Office, which us'd to be filled with
castors,

Of all sizes, shapes, and prices, for the by passers,
 Is now clear'd out, and large placards cover
 The window from one end unto the other ;

But what it is about I could not trace,—
 The crowd's so dense, I couldn't get near the place ;
 And their tongues were making such a clatter,
 That few, if any, knew what was the matter :
 But this I pick'd up from a knowing hand—
 That a man whom they said was drown'd, was hang'd :
 I think they call'd him—Ham—or Hammond.

Pres. Sir, I thank you heartily for this information :
 It's the cause we are trying now : the accusation
 Is against one WEGUELIN,—for murder and spoliation.

Jon. Mar. Ha ! his father was a Jew ;—I knew his
 dam ;—
 She sold pork sausages at Amsterdam,
 And therefore depend on't 'tis no flam. }

Enter SOLOMON MACE.

Pres. Well, Mace ; you had a tolerable crowd to-day
 Around your house.—How came you through them pray ?

Mace. Crowd !—I know not what you mean—I saw
 none.

Jon. Mar. Come, come, that will not do—you know
 that's hum ;—

You know that's fudge. What does the placard say ?

Mace. Placard ! I know of none—

Jon. Mar. ————— What, not to-day ?

That in your window hung—instead of *castors*?

Mace. If there was any, may I be flammigastred!

Jon. Mar. What! not a bill of news?—come, come,
you know—

Mace. If I do, shoot me for a carrion crow.

But stop a moment—let me recollect—

That I may not have reason to reflect

Upon myself.—I think—I have some doubt——

Pres. Come, come, sir, think no longer—let's have it
out.

Mace. Oh, yes, there is, it's true—if so you call—it's
Of Lodgings to be let to houseless varlets;
But nothing else, I swear by Royal felt:
So you have pump'd it out at last, by stealt'.
Now, Mr. President, I hope that's quite enough,
And that I meet no longer with rebuff.

M. in P. A great deal has been said by way of rhyme,
All which I trust will turn out superfine,
Because I like every thing that is sublime. }

Pres. Well, gentlemen, have you any more to say
On the “March of Intellect,” before it march away?

H. Cham. Yes, sir; I'm full of indignation!—makes
me rise—

'The fume of which I think will reach the skies:
To hear such vipers spout forth their venom'd fire
On one who, like myself, stands so much higher;

Not only in stature, but in rank I mean ;
 Whilst they are pigmys, and *rank* enough I ween
 In soul, in character, in talent also—
 As black's to white—as I'll soon plainly show.
 Without going through the black catalogue of charge
 That has been laid against this man, at large,
 Of which I'm confident he is as clear
 As I am living now and standing here.
 Sir, of all the tales I ever heard,
 There never was one truly so absurd.
 I challenge the whole of them that's been on oath,
 That not a word they've utter'd has been the truth ;
 I've witnesses to prove this, by and by,
 Will make them grin and hang their tails awry,
 Like filthy swine, grunting in a sty ;
 Whilst the Charger General has produced but one,
 Unless himself he counts, which in law is none.—
 A vast deal hearsay-evidence has been advanc'd,
 Amounting to what?—To nothing in the balance.
 I say, and swear, the man's alive and well !
 As my witness, when he comes, can tell,
 And will produce him without magic spell.
 But I'll no longer keep you much in doubt,
 For here he comes—a Giant, strong and stout—
 To defeat their wily purpose out and out.

Enter COMMODORE SWIFTSURE.

Well, Commodore, I'm very glad you're come,
I hope you've had a tolerable run.

Com. S. Aye, faith, I have ; were it not for the Algerines

Alias pickpockets, with which the streets now teem,
I should here have been a wonderful time ago,
As I promis'd,—but I must let you know
First how it happen'd, detaining me so long.
And this is truly the burden of the song :—
These pirates suddenly upon me pounc'd, before
I was aware, and took by force my store
Of dollars—chronometer—and, what was worse,
My compass too, by which I steer'd my course ;
So I was compell'd to chase a zig-zag sort of way
Amongst St. Giles's rocks, where the filthy spray
Did almost water-log me ; but at last
I caught the enemy, tho' scudding fast,
And clapt him in the bilboes, where he lies
To take his trial at the next assize.

Pres. Well, sir, you have run great hazard, undoubtedly,
Of life as well as robbery, most certainly ;
But what has that to do in the case before us ?
Do you know any thing of Hammond, the Liquorist ?

Com. S. Know him!—Yes; by George, I can't mistake
So many times he's cook'd me a beef-steak.

Pres. 'Tis said he's drown'd, and business at a stand.

Com. S. If he's either—then may I be d——'d!

I saw him, I declare, as I came in,
Serving out *blue ruin*, vulgo ——— gin;
And making bowls of whiskey-punch, I swear—
All which I understood was coming here:
But if you doubt the truth of what I tell,
I'll soon the mystery solve.—Waiter, ring the bell.

(*Enter HAMMOND.*)

When lo! to the astonish'd Ex's, Hammond again ap-
pears!

The Ghost of Hamlet could not cause greater fears—
Some said 'twas a spirit—others, 'twas the man;—
But he himself cried out—

Ham. ————— Indeed I am!

Come hither—examine—I'm solid flesh and blood
As any in this room, and quite as good.—

At length, being satisfied, and the confusion o'er,
Which long had been one scene of great uproar;
And the Chairman taking courage—without swords—
Put forth a pithy question in these words:—

Pres. Now, Mr. Hammond, I hope before you go—
 If 'tis not too inquisitive—you'll let me know
 Whether you were ever drown'd, or hang'd, at any time?

Ham. Never myself, sir; but a relation was, of mine :
 It's now some centuries since,—no doubt you've heard
 the story,—

When that vile wretch, Queen Esther, reign'd in
 Vashti's glory,—

The cursed Jews did hang him up so high,—
 I think 'twere fifty cubits,—or very nigh,—
 And all through a rascally Mordecai.

Pres. Ha! I see how it is: the enigma is explain'd,
 And the ends of Justice are at length attain'd.—

Sir, I thank you for this explanation,
 And require no further attestation.

So you may now withdraw to your occupation.

Gentlemen, as the evidence is all gone through,
 I'll simply take a cursory view

In summing up this flimsy charge to you,—

Of which there has been a systematic plan—

Diabolical in the extreme—too deep to scan—

To destroy both life and character of a good man.

Indeed, gentlemen, language falls short to explain to you
 The villany and perjury of this vile crew.

Really my indignation is so great,

It makes me jump almost out of my seat :

I'll therefore strip the mask from off the face,
 That the true lineaments you may easy trace ;
 And shew to you, like a magic looking-glass,
 The various artifices that have pass'd—
 Of this dark lurking plot—got up to answer
 Some sinister purpose of their own, hereafter.——
 Now, as to murder—the man has been before us,
 And prov'd, beyond a doubt, to our sight notorious,
 That he's the subject matter in the charge,
 Of which the Charger General talk'd so large,
 And boasted what he'd do—to intimidate with fear—
 But, like a vanquish'd knight, now drops his spear.——
 Gentlemen, the other allegations are a tissue of the same ;
 You know the Eccentric Books every one, by name,
 Are now within our desk.—Waiter, bring the key,
 And open it before us,—come, let me see :——
 Aye, here they are indeed—most certainly.
 Gentlemen, are you satisfied ?—

Eccs. ————— All, all, undoubtedly !

Pres. Then there's a death-blow to this weighty cause
 Of murder, and destruction of our laws ;
 I therefore shall proceed to put the question—
 Of which I think there can be no objection.

Eccs. There is ! there is !—we declare our Bard in-
 nocent ;
 And on that head are perfectly content.

Pres. Gentlemen, you've met my ideas—I assent.

Sir, I congratulate you heartily ; and, by every one admitted,

You go from this bar most honorably acquitted.

But, gentlemen, ere I quit this exalted seat,
I've an important duty still that on me wait,
To pronounce a further judgment of the Senate :

It is respecting our Charger General—

Who really, to speak my mind, meant no ill :

You know his humour is sometimes very rum,
And no doubt brought this charge by way of fun.

We should not surely punish him severely—

If we do at all—as it strikes me clearly

He's sorry for what has past, and will apologize

To us and to the accus'd—he has so scandaliz'd ;

I therefore hope that he will be acquitted,

Tho' malice prepense appears to have been committed,

Because I think he stands complete outwitted ;

As all he has said or done this blessed night,

Shews plainly his poor brain has taken flight.

So let's take pity on him, in good part,

And not chastise him—lest we break his heart.

So, gentlemen, is the charge frivolous and vexatious ? say,

Eccentrics, one and all—

Eccs. ————— Nay, nay, nay !—

Pres. Now, Mr. Charger General, take my advice,

And scorn not the admonition—tho' concise—

In all your future charges be more nice :

Reflecting,—were you in such a situation,
What would be your feelings on the occasion?—

But I shall say no more, but wait reply,
Which every one expects you'll not deny,
Considering you've experienced such lenity.—

But hark! the prompter's bell calls me away,—
So to all good night—as I must obey—
Until we meet again another day.

(*Exit. President.*)

EPILOGUE.

WELL, gentlemen, as the curtain dropt, I stole away
To solicit your opinion of our play.
I did my best, I believe you'll all allow,
But I was foil'd,—permit me, I'll tell you how :—
My charge was good, as good as charge could be,
But somehow I committed *Felo de se*——
Which was not intended, upon my honor, by me.
But such is the glorious uncertainty of the law,
We too oft lose the substance and catch at a straw.
That Poet will certainly be my death, in truth,
Since he has taken up my trade forsooth;
But he will find his match when next I meet him
Upon the stage of life, for popularity's fleeting.
My poetic and legal knowledge is so superior,
That I am sure, in time, to eclipse that meteor;
And should have done it now, hadn't been by chance,
My principal witness was in a trance.
As for the other—a whining knave I call him—
Threw me completely on my back a sprawling;

But I shall rally by and by again,
 When I'll go at it, tooth and nail, amain.
 I am not daunted by this slight rebuff,
 And trust another time he'll have enough ;
 I mean his belly-full, or Old Nick take me,
 And then you'll see how he'll cry out *peccavi*.
 In the mean time, should you want assistance,
 A retaining fee will never meet resistance :
 Allow me to give a card, if one is in my pocket,
 That you may not mistake, and go to neighbour Locket.
 By the by, I'm going to move, and 'tis necessary to tell
 ye,
 Lest you should lose your labor—going to slender Billy ;
 So you'll find my new residence
 A few doors from the Regent's Jaw,
 Where business, as usual, 's carried on
 In all branches of the law :—
 But, before I take my leave, I beg to apologize,
 As in the heat of pleading words sometimes will arise
 That may engender wrath : if so, I'm extremely sorry,
 For it would wound my heart, and drive me melancholy,
 Were I to be the cause of such unpleasant feeling
 Amongst my best of friends, by whom I get my living ;
 But trust, as I hope for patronage, that is not the case,
 And that I may hereafter with pleasure shew my face—
 As nothing shall be wanting on my part to serve you all,

Whenever my attendance is required in the Eccentric
Hall.—

As such I now retire, with respectful ceremony,
To return to my sweet Home—to love and harmony—
For tho' in search of pleasure, man continual roam,
Of all the pleasures in the world there's "nothing like
Home."

THE LAUREAT'S FAREWELL.

TO THE RENOWNED SOCIETY
OF ECCENTRIC NOTORIETY.

GENTLEMEN,

IN addressing these few lines to you,
Your Laureat takes his last adieu ;
That when on them you cast an eye,
'Twill keep alive Eccentricity.
You'll then remember the poor bard,
And think his fate was rather hard.
Tho' honored by that lofty name,
Which emanated from your fane,
He now must trudge an humble life,
And mix again with noise and strife.
No longer can he mount aloft,
Tho' many have been the time and oft
He soar'd so high for recreation,—
He seem'd a spot in the creation.
Olympus own'd his powerful sway,
And all the Gods did homage pay :

So much he had them in subjection,
 There was not one that could eject him!—
 He made them dance, or sing, or play,
 As pleasure prompt, when he was gay:
 Or to his satiric, sprightly wit,
 He wore the cap that it did fit;
 Even Jupiter, their sovereign prince,
 Bow'd to superior excellence—
 And paid his court, his grace to win,
 As much as his subjects paid to him.
 Some thought he'd not come down again,
 To ever tread the terrestrial plain;
 But what the world's ideas surpass'd—
 To him was quite an easy task;
 He dash'd the clouds about, like spray,
 And open'd to himself a way!
 For to descend with perfect ease,
 When whim prevail'd, just as he please,
 Through thick and thin he steer'd his course;
 And sat so well upon his horse,
 They could not oust him from the saddle—
 Tho' oftentimes tried at by the rabble—
 So that he thought himself secure
 'Gainst every artful rogue or boor.
 But what could not by might be gain'd,
 Was soon by subtil fraud obtain'd:—

A half-starved Friar, hit on a plan
 To steal his steed—poor foolish man!—
 His fam'd Pegasus, for whom his love
 Exceeded Venus's for her Doves;
 Who was ne'er known from him to stray,
 Or loiter on the Parnassian way;
 But always obedient to his mind,
 Gentle, dutiful, and kind.
 He was his companion from his youth,
 If e'er in fault, he own'd the truth;
 Tho' it might cast on him a blame,
 It left no stain unto his shame.
 But, as the wise adage relate,
 We shut the door when 'tis too late:
 Could we but see so much before hand,
 Should be the wisest in the land;
 But nine times in ten it is the case,
 It's found out after it's taken place.
 Now the facts are these, I do aver,
 Without using more metaphor:—
 The poor animal had just come in
 From off a journey it had been,
 Rode by his master, WEGUELIN;
 To bring some tidings, of great import,
 To the Eccentrics' royal court;

}

Who all were met by proclamation,
 Expecting surprising information
 From some foreign land or nation :
 That Pegasus had discover'd golden mines,
 In Olympus, or the huge Alpines—
 Very much wanted at that time—
 To renovate their exhausted chest,
 That was now become a jest.
 So he was graciously receiv'd,
 And order'd for to have a feed ;
 Whilst his lord took a little ale,
 To give him strength to tell his tale.
 Conceiving him safe, as the Ex's muse,
 And that he'd never be abus'd
 By any Christian, to his hurt,
 But what's to be said of Jew or Turk ?
 I beg, by way of interlude,
 To use a little similitude ;
 For trope is necessary sometime,
 To make it fit, as well as rhyme ;
 So, without any more ado,
 I'll now relate the facts to you.—
 Just at this crisis, this hungry hound
 Smelt out Pegasus was come down,
 And, gnashing his pale lantern-jaws,
 With joy—to get him in his claws ;—

Not to let slip the precious moment,
 Unless he met with some opponent.
 Thus flush'd with success, in ecstasy,
 Breath'd forth this sweet soliloquy :—
 Said he, “ If I have any brains,
 As sure as my name's ——— ——— ———
 I'll pounce upon, ride off the jade ;
 By that exploit, my fortune's made.
 The budget with which he is well stor'd,
 Will be to me a miser's hoard.”
 Now Pegasus, he had got no wealth,
 But what was innate in himself ;
 And ride him he could'nt was known well ;—
 The Caitiff stole him for to sell ;
 Faith, sure enough he put in action
 The very scheme he had been hatching ;
 With wily craft he laid his plans,
 And soon accomplished his ends.
 I'll give his character here some touches,
 Lest you should fall into his clutches ;
 Which if you did, depend upon it,
 No good would ever sure come of it :—
 This sly Fox differs from another,
 For one paw's shorter than the other,
 With which he snatches up his prey
 Whene'er he finds it in his way ;

A perfect glutton of his kind,
 Devours all that he can find ;
 He's sometimes 'guised in a cowl,
 And bays the moon with hideous howl ;
 'Tis then his appetite's most keen,
 As from the sequel will be seen.
 The benighted traveller seeks in vain
 A friendly cot on Afric's plain ;
 With horror hears the lion roar,
 Who prowls the desert round for gore ;
 Sinks down with terror and dismay,
 Expecting death before the day ;
 But when at an inn, and treated kind,
 And shelter'd from the north-east wind,
 Fear and despair never haunt his mind.
 'Twas thus Pegasus dreamt no harm,
 As he was comfortable and warm,
 And therefore it gave him no concern.
 Poor silly fool, so easy caught,
 Reason and experience ought have taught
 Him where to place his confidence,
 Fam'd as he was for wit and sense :
 But shew of friendship too oft retard,
 And throws a man from off his guard,
 When he should be most vigilant
 To watch pretended friends' intent ;

For so it was by a surprise
 He took him off in a disguise,
 And sold him for a monstrous price
 To his musty Convent, a very hell,
 On Garlic Hill's the stinking cell
 Of infidels, worse than Old Nick ;
 'Twould make his Holiness quite sick.
 Were he to see their Pandemonium,
 He'd excommunicate the whole of them :
 Their blasphemous songs and drunken revels,
 Rank them beneath the swinish level ;—
 An unprincipled set of knaves,
 Would set the universe in a blaze
 Were they able ;—but, thank God,
 George keeps them down with an iron rod :
 So they may storm, and growl, and swear—
 Bite, they cannot, I declare.
 But to return to my sad story,
 Which extinguishes all my glory,—
 Pegasus now is broken down,
 And, as a draught-horse 'bout the town,
 I do not think he's worth a crown :
 For whilst the poor devil's any breath,
 They'll goad him on unto his death ;
 And, what I'm most afraid, he'll be
 So hackney'd, he'll no longer flee ;

For so merciless are his masters,
 They care not a straw for him hereafter :
 No matter if dogs'-meat betide him,
 If they can make a penny by him ;
 So to the knackers he must come,
 Where mercy's never shewn to none ;
 And that I know must be his doom.
 There see him stretched upon the ground,
 Looking composedly around ;
 Though writhing with a broken heart,
 That he and the Ex's now must part.
 " Farewell ! farewell, my friends ! he cries,"
 Whilst the tears' streaming from his eyes ;
 Then heav'd a sigh—a heavy groan—
 Life's now extinct—his race is run
 Beyond recall—the muse is gone !







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